

Message Text

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E.O. 11652: NA

TAGS: OEXC, BU (STOITCHKOV, NIKIFOR)

SUBJECT: INTERNATIONAL VISITOR: SPECIAL REQUEST

FOR CU/IVP AND CU/EE (INFO: EUR/EE)

REF: A) SOFIA 2137; B) SOFIA 1907; C) SOFIA 35

1. MINISTER OF TRANSPORT HAS REQUESTED THAT AT NO EXPENSE TO USG A TECHNICAL EXPERT ACCOMPANY FIRST DEPUTY MINISTER STOITCHKOV ON HIS FORTHCOMING VISIT TO THE US.

2. EXPERT WOULD BE VASSILEV NEDYALKO VRADZHALIEV, CHIEF OF PASSENGER TRANSPORTATION SERVICES ADMINISTRATIONIN MINISTRY OF TRANSPORT. PERMISSION FOR HIM TO ACCOMPANY STOITCHKOV IS NOT A CONDITION FOR STOITCHKOV'S VISIT TO WHICH HE LOOKS FORWARD VERY MUCH; BUT STOITCHKOV EXPLAINED TO AMBASSADOR EVENING JANUARY 7 THAT HE SINCERELY BELIEVES HE WOULD DERIVE GREATER ADVANTAGE FROM HIS VISIT IF HE WERE ACCCOMPANIED BY VRADZHALIEV.

3. SHOULD BE NOTED THAT WHILE STOITCHKOV IS INTERESTED IN BOTH PASSENGER TRANSPORTATION AND FREIGHT, VRADZHALIEV IS RESPONSIBLE ONLY FOR PASSENGER TRANSPORTATION. TO THE EXTENT THAT FIRST (OR SECOND) PART OF STOITCHKOV'S SCHEDULE COULD EMPHASIZE THE PASSENGER TRANSPORTATION ASPECTS, VRADZHALIEV'S VISIT TO THE US COULD BE ABBREViated.

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4. WE STRONGLY RECOMMENDTHAT DEPARTMENT GIVE A "NIHIL

OBSTAT" TO THE PROPOSAL THAT VRADZHALIEV COME ALONG. THIS WOULD BE ON UNDERSTANDING THAT (A) TRAVEL AND ALL OTHER EXPENSES FOR VRAZHALIEV WOULD BE BORNE BY GOB; (B) ANY PROGRAMMING DIFFERING FROM PROGRAMMING OF STOITCHKOV VISIT WOULD HAVE TO BE ARRANGED BY BULGARIAN EMBASSY WASHINGTON.

5. REASONS FOR ABOVE RECOMMENDATION ARE:

- A. AS STOITCHKOV'S BIODATA (REFTEL B) SHOWS, HE HAS LONG EXPERIENCE IN PARTY. WHILE HE IS AN EXPERIENCED ADMINISTRATOR AND DECISION-MAKER, HIS POSITION IN MINISTRY THUS APPEARS TO BE MORE POLITICAL THAN PROFESSIONAL. VRADZHALIEV'S PRESENCE WOULD PROVIDE TECHNICAL EXPERTISE NEEDED FOR GOB TO OBTAIN MAXIMUM VISIT FROM STOITCHKOV'S VISIT.
- B. IT WOULD ALSO GIVE HIM MORE CONFIDENCE. CONVERSELY, HE WOULD WORRY ABOUT HIS PROGRAM, A RELATIVELY NOVELTY FOR BULGARIAN LEADERS, IF WE REFUSED TO HAVE HIM ACCCOMPANIED BY SOMEONE WHOSE TECHNICAL JUDGMENT HE TRUSTS.
- C. WHILE COMMERCIAL PROMOTION IS NOT PURPOSE OF IV PROGRAM, WE BELIEVE VRADZHALIEV'S PARTICIPATION IN STOITCHKOV'S PROGRAM COULD ALSO FACILITATE EVENTUAL GOB EQUIPMENT PURCHASES AND OTHER COMMERCIAL LINKS. WE SEE NO CONFLICT BETWEEN THIS TECHNICIAN ACCOMPANYING AN INTERNATIONAL VISITOR AND CONCENTRATING OUR ATTENTION ON OUR OWN OBJECTIVES IN CONNECTION WITH STOITCHKOV VISIT.

6. PLEASE REPLY BY IMMEDIATE MESSAGE.

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